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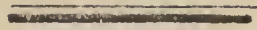
DON PEDRO.

Bought

1827



DON PEDRO.



A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Count de Valdesoto.

Pedro de Rascafria, *called El Diabolo.*

Henrique, *his younger brother.*

Basco de Robeldondo, *host of Venta nueva.*

Nicolas Sassenigo.

Tayo,	} robbers.
Roca,	
Cerberero,	
Lopez,	
Martin,	}

President *of the Inquisition.*

Ignacio, *Alguazil Mayor.*

Gomez, *servant to Valdesoto.*

1 *Citizen of Segovia.*

2 *Ditto.*

Celestina, *daughter of Valdesoto.*

Mariguita, *hostess of Venta nueva.*

Cattania, *her reputed daughter.*

Benedicta, *an old woman.*

Inquisitors, Soldiers, Servants, &c.

SCENE, Spain, in and about Segovia.

DON PEDRO.

ACT I.

Scene, the interior of a Spanish Venta,

BASCO enters.

Bas. Hah ! by St. Isidro, 'tis come at last—a pelting shower. Gramercy !—a copious benediction of sky-water. The clouds have burst their bladders, and souse it down by buckets full. Why, dame, where are you ? Mariguita ! gossip ! How often must I call before you come ?

MARIGUITA enters.

Marig. How now, what ails you ? why do you bawl so loud ?

Bas. Hang on the pot, my doxey. Stuff it well with your tomatas, garlicks, leeks, and pepper, and slice me in some collops of young kid—we shall have guests anon.

Marig. Yes, when it rains they come, when good St. Isidro doses their thread-bare doublets, then they flock like rats to 'scape a drowning ; else, they pass by our solitary venta, and house themselves at Espinar, or farther on at Villacastin, which sucks all custom from us.

Bas. Let 'em pass on, there's not a tree, a

shrub, nay, not a leaf to shelter a musquito 'twixt this and Espinar; and now St. Isidro, (thanks to his reverence) has condescended to untruss at last, let 'em pass by our hovel if they like it—Look out, look out! I hear the tread of mules.

Marig. I say of mules—you hear the tread, perhaps, of a poor unshod ass, staggering beneath the unholy load of some fat bare-foot monk—a guest that brings no blessing to our larder but a huge paunch, that swallows all our store. Give me the music of a trio of mules, jingling their bells before some stately coach hung round with bandeloirs and hams, with store of wine in lockers underneath to feast some wealthy Señor, on whose fragments we browse most piously—these are vouchsafements that can't come too often, my merry Basco.

Bas. Put Señor Don before it, and you are right. Señor Don Basco de Robeldondo, host of the Venta nueva; that is my style and title.

Marig. Aye, your new style—when you clipt mules and cobbled old bonachoes, then gypsey Jonchin was all your title—but hush! what guest is this?

PEDRO DE RASCAFRIA *enters.*

Ped. Save you, fair publican! I greet your lips. [*Kisses her.*]

Marig. Aye, marry, there is manners in your greeting; but money Señor, is the thing we look to.

Ped. Why money, as you say, is no encumbrance to such as ride in state on sturdy mules; my beast is poor and meagre, wondrous patient, and temperate in his meals; a catholic good creature, that keeps Lent on docks and thistles,

when he has luck to find 'em by the way-side ; 'twould be but charity to treat his teeth with a small truss of straw, and save the rackstaves, which he is now belabouring.

Marig. We serve out nothing upon charity—we have an oath against it ; St. James of Compostella knows we have.

Ped. I cry you mercy—oaths must be observed ; I have an oath to dine before we part, and that's a hungry oath, that will not be said nay to.

Bas. Your beast and you will find good entertainment, so you have money to appease your hunger.

Ped. Well, money is a pretty go-between ; it has the knack of pacifying stomachs ; a stranger needs no usher who has that : why, money, my brave host, would be the loadstone to draw the iron out of that stiff back of yours, and make it bend down to my shoe-strings. And you, my dainty gossip, you would smooth that angry brow, which, like the furrow'd sea, mounts into waves, and smile upon me kindly at the sight of a few dollars ; would you not ?

Marig. Try me, produce your dollars, and mark how soon an omelet shall start up, or a fine olio smoke upon the table.

Ped. Look then ! behold the idol that you worship. [*shows a purse of gold.*] Now bustle you, mine host, serve up a dish of barley to my beast—I'll meditate a grace before I dine ; he can fall to without it.

Bas. Fear nothing, Cavaliero ; for your beast, he shall be served most reverently ; household matters I leave to my good dame ; she'll toss you up a handsome olio, and it may be, enliven your repast with a gay seguedilla, or perchance

the Gaetana-fandango, we have those who can perform it featly.

Marig. That will I, though I bestir myself to make you sport.

Ped. Away! away! then, thou mercenary thing—I would be private. [*Walks aside.*]

Bas. Come hither, dame! as sure as I am Basco, that is, Don Pedro de Rascafria, the veriest devil in all Castile for mischief.

Marig. It is, it is Diabolo himself, the terror of the forest.

Ped. What are you muttering? begone!

[*Ereunt Basco and Mariguita.*]

Ped. Why, man must live by man: he that abounds must 'minister to him that lacks, and if he will not do it with good grace, lo! here are urgent arguments to enforce it. [*puts down his pistols on the table.*] Pedro de Rascafria was not born camelion-like, to live upon the air—no, there are certain natural gifts call'd appetites, lusts and desires, with which I am endow'd to quicken industry, and spur me on to great and noble darings. It should seem, when I was born, as if Dame Nature said—"Go forth, my child; live at free quarters, give thy genius scope at the world's cost, and never stay thy hand for fear, or pity's sake."—I have fulfilled this motherly commission to a tittle. I dig no dollars from the mines; I take them flying, as the prize of valour. I covet no man's house, for where I list I lie down; and, like an ancient Troglodite, prefer my cavern to the palace of a king: love I ne'er felt for woman; to desire, with me is to possess; and to possess, is but to satisfy a wandering humour, and so pass on to objects more alluring.

CATTANIA enters unobserved.

Cat. Ah! there he is—Diabolo the terrible—what then? I'll venture: Señor—Señor—

Ped. Well, what's the matter?

[*Not looking towards her.*]

Cat. Did you call, Señor? is there nothing wanting?

Ped. Hah! by St. Anthony, a tempting wench.

Cat. Will you take company to help off time? Sure you must needs be lonesome.

Ped. Who are you, and whence come you?

Cat. I am the daughter of your host and hostess, if I may take their word for it. I can trace up my pedigree no higher.

Ped. No, if you do, you must trace it to the Nile, for thou'rt Egyptian born—a very pretty, black-eyed, flippant gypsey.

Cat. Aye, so some say, and call me Guittana, but my true name's Cattania—who gave it, and where it was laid on me, I know not, nor concern myself to know. Do you like seguedillas? I'm provided.

Ped. You are indeed, with a good stock of impudence—you can dance too—you have the true fandango, you young gypsey; where are your castanets?

Cat. What will you give me, Señor?

Ped. Nothing.

Cat. What, absolutely nothing? oh for shame! you are full of money, why are you so sparing? you are young and comely, why are you so sullen? come, give me this. [*Takes up his pistol.*]

Ped. Let it alone: it is for my use, not your's.

Cat. You see that I can handle it, and point it too; if I but touch this spring, you are a dead man.

Ped. What then? you would not kill me.

Cat. Kill you indeed! not for the world, not I—only sweet Señor, give me up that bag of dollars you are burthen'd with, or look to have this bullet through your brains.

Ped. I'll give thee nothing, though I like thee well for thy brave spirit. Lay the pistol down.

Cat. Lay down your money first — Come, come, impart! your money or your life—you are fairly pounded. Deliver, or I fire!

Ped. Fire, in the devil's name, and do your worst.

Cat. Thou hast the devil's name, for thou art Pedro, fitly nick-named Diabolo; thou art that enterprising spirit that lays this forest under contribution.

Ped. Be sure I am, that very Pedro de Rascafria, at whose name the boldest heart may tremble—Kill me, and thou'lt be canoniz'd.

Cat. No, if I'm sainted it shall be for mercy, and not for murder—[*lays down the pistol.*] I like your free and lofty style of living; but not your devil's tricks, your bloody dealings—I would fain teach you pity.

Ped. How would you compass that?

Cat. By inspiring you with love; they are passions near a-kin.

Ped. Away! I cannot love!

Cat. 'Tis false; you cannot live, and say you cannot love!

Ped. If I should love thee, gypsey, I should kill thee for having made me the base fool of woman.

Cat. I fear you not, for cruelty is but a habit with you; love is your nature's instinct.

Ped. Come with me then; but mark me, wench, I'll never trust thee further from my

sight than my sword's length. I had a page shot by my side this morning, thou shalt put on his clothes and fill his place—Good chance but I'll promote thee to the like glorious death. Thou foolish thing, to call me by my name, and boast of the discovery! thou hast lost thy liberty henceforth for ever; all efforts to escape from me are vain; thou shalt as soon shake off the famish'd wolf, when he has hook'd his fangs into thy ribs.

Cat. I care not, I am here a slave to wretches, that call themselves my parents, but who stole me, or bought me at a price, I know not which. Strike off my fetters; I've a taste for freedom, and my spirit mounts to a pitch as lofty as thine own. I'll serve thee truly, boldly, and zealously.

Ped. That's my brave wench! agreed—

Enter TAYO, ROCA, CERBERO, robbers.

Now Tayo, Roca, Cerbero, whence come ye?

Roca. May we speak out? is that wench staunch, commander?

Ped. Staunch as the rock we dwell in: an Amazon, that loves the smell of powder better than civet; one, that will not wink when you shall shut both eyes.

Cer. Perish the man, who dare not look on death with both eyes steadily: you squint at petticoats, Diabolo. I will not speak before that gypsy wench, not I; we'll have no she-monkeys in our menagerie.

Ped. Go, hang thyself, thou rascal, Cerbero, for a three-headed dog!

Cat. The rogue is nothing better than a bully—Give me your pistol, Pedro, and I'll pounce him; nay, give it me, I say, and he shall quickly

have a sop to cure him of his barking—Does he think to scare me with his black mustachios?

Cer. Peace, peace, my Joan of Arc, I hug thy valour. I did but speak to prove thee.

Cat. Thou'rt but a swaggering knave and no true man, spite of those dog's-tails underneath thy nose.

Ped. That's my brave page! now let me see the man that dares to vex thee! by my head I swear, he dies that does it—Tayo, you are civil, yet brave withal, be spokesman for the rest, and let me know your business.

Tayo. Puissant Chief, we have made prize of one, a young cavaliero it should seem, of no mean sort. My fellows, Cerbero and Roca, would fain have knock'd him on the head outright; but I, in virtue of my captainship, deputed in your absence, held them from it.

Cer. Yes, and you'll swing for it, good hope, if he is let loose to turn informer.

Roca. Captain, this Tayo is not fit to lead us, he has a twang of pity, that don't suit our natural dispositions or our calling.

Cer. You are not troubled with that vice yourself, merciless Diabolo; your weak side is only towards these petticoat adventurers.

Roca. Peace, Cerbero, you'll urge him past his bearing.

Ped. Stand from before him, Roca: by St. Pedro, the patron of my name, I'll strike him dead.

[*Draws his sword.*]

Cat. Stop, I demand a boon! it is my first and you shall grant it, captain—Give him his life, and let him scoff his fill.

Cer. Captain, I cry you mercy! I will offend no more.

Ped. See that you don't—bridle that triple tongue, and be more temperate.

Enter MARIGUITA.

Marig. Why Catty, Catty — what are you about? hah! the whole gang upon us! we are lost. *[Runs out.]*

Ped. Tie up that cat, and stop her bawling tongue, Roca and Cerbero—but mark me, lads, no pilfering—bind her only to her chair and leave her. *[Exeunt Roca and Cerbero.]* Now, Tayo, let me hear of this same cavalier whom you have taken—where have you lodged him?

Tayo. In the cave: Lopez and Martin are in charge of him.

Ped. How is he call'd?

Tayo. He would not tell his name.

Ped. Young, did you say?

Tayo. About your age, sir, and in shape and feature much favouring you, methinks, save that the sun has not been so familiar with his complexion, nor has his brow that cloud which hangs on your's; but is serene and mild.

Ped. My mind misgives me that it is my brother Don Henrique, who was this very day to meet my uncle, Count de Valdesoto, and his road lies through our purlieus. If it should be Henrique *[aside.]*—but come, the cave, the cave—the cave—let us begone—my spirit is in arms.

Cat. Will you not stay your hunger, ere you march?

Ped. No, my gay wench, our spirits, like the air, on which we'll feed, shall be free, active, quick to conceive, and give to thought its instant operation and effect. Where is your arm—away, away! we've noble game on foot. *[Exeunt.]*

Scene changes to a Kitchen, where MARIGUITA is discovered tied down in her seat.

Mar. Ah, cruel monsters! flinty-hearted villains! What will become of me? Cattania's fled, that gypsey has gone off with those that bound me, and Basco's fears will keep him all night from me, hid in his hole underneath the straw—Hark! who comes here? [*Nicolas enters.*] Blest be Saint Monica, 'tis Nicolas, as I live, friend Nicolas of Cornejo. Welcome, welcome, the honestest, best soul in all Castile. I'm joy'd to see thee, honest, honest Nicolas!

Nic. Yes, I am honest to a fault, good mistress—too honest for this world, Heaven knows—a sip of aqua vita, with your leave; the wind is cold—

Marig. Alas, good Nicolas, I cannot stir; do you not see I'm fastened to this chair; some thieves have fettered me; make haste, make haste, and set me free.

Nic. I will, I will. I'm coming—Why, they've done it as 'twere for doom's day. Thieves do you call 'em? They must be water-thieves that have belay'd you after this fashion; this is seamen's work; these are no granny's knots.

Marig. Stand not to prate, but loose me instantly.

Nic. I will, I will. The rain has numb'd my fingers. I'll beat them into feeling, and then to work. Have the rogues filched your money?

Marig. No, no; my money 'scap'd them, 'tis safe within the till; Saint Pedro *ad Vincula* protected me.

Nic. Saint Pedro ow'd you that turn, methinks, for you, like him, are now fast bound in fetters, you are *ad Vincula*, methinks, though no Saint.

Marig. Where are you going?

Nic. Only to the till, to see that all is safe.
Ah, here it is! why this is wondrous lucky.

Marig. Come, come, you do but lose the time, good Nicolas—I am in pain the whilst.

Nic. Are you in pain? poor soul, poor soul.

Marig. As I'm a sinner, they've almost cut my shoulder blades asunder—dispatch, dispatch!

Nic. I'm coming; but if you are a sinner, pain is good, 'twill serve in lieu of penance.

Marig. I have bought off my penance. I had just paid the father his atonement; therefore the till is open.

Nic. Right, you've done well! then what remains, you know, is owing to Saint Pedro, who procured it. I'll take it to his shrine at Espinar, and rid you of the journey.

Marig. Why villain, villain, will you rob me of it?

Nic. No, rob you,—I! what, honest, honest Nicolas your friend—the honestest, best soul in all Castile? I'll not defraud Saint Pedro of a maravedi. I've left the till quite clean—Good bye to you!—When I come back, I'll bring a blessing with me—I shall find you here at my return.

Marig. Wretch, will you leave me thus? Take all I have, but free me from this torture.

Nic. Well, I'll just take a peep to see that all sits smooth and easy to your comfort—Dear me, dear me! how your poor hands are swelled. I take it 'tis the stoppage of the blood, that forces all your fingers into puddings, as black as a bologna. Hold! here is something that hangs loose about you—I'll brace it up a little tighter for you. How do you find it now?

Marig. Wretch, merciless, unfeeling wretch, you've cut my arms in two.

Nic. Well, they can spare it; they are big enough—Good bye to you. My love to honest Basco when you see him.—He'll thank me for this service—fare you well! Methinks I've now repaid you for your tricks. Basco shall have the money back again. [*Aside and exit.*]

Marig. Ah, me, ah, me! Must I sit here and perish? help, help! Oh gracious lady of Atocha, send me some help and save me!

BENEDICTA enters.

Ben. Save you, mistress! Alas, alas! I heard your piteous cries as I passed by your doors. Come, come, I'll quickly loose you—I'm old and poor, and deeds of charity fall rarely in my power.—So, so, 'tis done! Now you are free. [*Unties the cords.*]

Marig. Oh! this is timely succour. My poor shoulders, how they do tingle! Ah! there's none like our lady of Atocha at a hard pinch; I thought that she would hear me: I'm sure she sent you hither.

Ben. No, mistress, no. No lady sent me hither, but a few matches, which I looked to vend at the next village, whither I am travelling. I fear you've been ill treated by some robbers; they say Don Pedro's people are about—a cruel knave!—They call him el Diabolo.

Marig. I wou'd his name-sake had the knave that robbed me. I am plundered, stript, I've not a maravedi left to cross your hands withall.

Ben. Well, well, I do not look for a return; I am enough rewarded to have helped you out of your distress, and done a christian office. If

you find other in the like necessity, give as you have received assistance freely, 'twill better recommend you to Heaven's favour, than offerings at the altar of Atocha. [*Exit.*]

Marig. I'm glad she's gone, the hag ! I would not trust myself an hour under the same roof with such an impious creature, that can profane our lady of Atocha, and claim the credit of releasing one.

Enter BASCO.

Bas. Ah, my poor Mariguita, who has freed thee ?

Marig. Ask rather who it is has filch'd my money ; wou'd you believe, that shaver of Comejo, that Nicolas Sasseuigo, whom we thought so honest, has plundered me before my very face.

Bas. Come, come, 'tis all a gambol, a mere jest—I have your money.

Marig. A pretty jest forsooth ! a precious gambol ! I'll make an inquisition job of it : I'll teach him what it is to finger consecrated cash—It shall be his turn next to be tied up, then let him take his fill, if he likes jesting—but come, let's search the house for what is left ; if Pedro and his gang have taken nothing with them but Cattania, we may perhaps find profit in that loss.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

The Robbers' Cave. A Lamp burning. An iron grating that communicates with a Dungeon.

PEDRO enters.

Ped. 'Tis he ! I spied him through the iron grating : 'Tis Henrique, that younger born, my brother, whose mawkish insipidity of character is my contempt ; for he has grace and goodness, and carries a precious outside to the world. I, a free untam'd spirit, rough as Esau ; he smooth as Jacob, his fair prototype, whose craft he copies ; he cou'd wind round my foolish father's heart, base, crawling, slippery serpent ; I stood erect in native energy, and like the crested cockatrice defied him.—Therefore to council, vengeance !—If I spare him, let Nature spit on me, and call me coward.

Enter TAYO, LOPEZ, and MARTIN.

Tayo. Valiant Don Pedro, let your lofty spirit this once stoop to pity. Kill not the youth whom we have made our prisoner,

Lop. We wou'd fain save him, captain ; in warm blood when the balls fly about us, we blink not at fair service : but cool determined murder we revolt from. Our stomachs are not strong enough to digest it.

Mar. We are banditti, captain, and not butchers. In short, we will not do it, brave Diabolo, nor suffer it to be done, so there's an end.

Ped. How say you—will not do it? Harkye, my friends, have you considered, if you let him loose, you let loose an informer who knows your haunts? Did ever man escape from this cave alive?

Lop. 'Twas dark night, captain, when we brought him hither, and when we take him hence, it shall be no less dark, for we will muffle him with a thick barcelona, wrapt about his eyes.

Ped. What say your comrades, Cerbero and Roca?

Mar. Hang 'em, they're drunk.

Tayo. The aqua vitæ at the venta neuva swims in their heads, they neither hear nor see, nor cou'd they stand upon their feet to stay us, if they had hearts for it.

Ped. Hear me, my friends, we'll have no mutiny. I am your captain, am I not?

Tayo. You are, and we are sworn to obey you loyally.

Ped. Make loyal suit then to me, and I will grant it.

Lop. We do, we do make suit.

Mar. We scorn to mutiny; only we do not like the hangman's office.

Ped. Compunctious dastards! [*Aside.*] Let me think—I have it. He must put off that dress which now he wears; he cannot quit the cavern so apparell'd; here, Tayo, take my keys, you'll find a suit complete within my cell. Equip him at all points as for the forest—Thus he shall pass unquestioned.

Tayo. 'Tis well conceived; we thank you, noble captain; it shall be done.

Ped. And hark'ye, Tayo, bring his clothes to me, I have a use for them. Enter, the grate

is open—[*Unlocks the dungeon,*]—[*Exeunt Tayo, Lopez, and Martin.*]—Capitulating slaves, I cast you off; my soul is sick of your society.

Enter ROCA and CERBERO.

Roca. How long are we to wait your decree, most valorous captain?

Cer. When may we cut the wind-pipe of our prisoner, gracious Diabolo?

Roca. The life of business is dispatch, commander. It is not common with you to be tardy.

Cer. Besides, our dinner waits, and we wou'd fain clear away all our business out of hand. We wou'd not be disturb'd in our siesta.

Ped. Nor shall you, comrades! I commend your zeal for the safe being of our brave community; but for this once I'll be your executioner, and take the fate of this young stranger to myself.

Cer. Well! it won't overburden you, Diabolo. Your conscience has good stowage; 'twill not founder.

Ped. Fear it not, Cerbero: Tayo is stripping this young poppinjay of his fine feathers; that done, do you see, I must interrogate him apart; there may be secrets to be screw'd from him, that may conduce to profit—Go to your dinner, lads! save me a plate, and I'll come to you when the work is over. Away, away! [*Exeunt Robbers.*]

CATTANIA enters, dressed as a Page.

Cat. Now, my good master, how do you like me thus? Am I not a proper 'squire for a true knight of the forest?

Ped. Viva Cattania! having now new-rigg'd you, we must new-name you.

Cat. Call me Fortunio, for I bless the hour when first I follow'd after your gallant fortunes.

Ped. Fortunio be your name! Arm yourself well, and get your mule caparison'd: I'm going forth.

For. Go where you will, I am your faithful shadow.

Ped. Take your eyes off from me, you saucy gypsey, there's witchcraft in their glances—stand aside! Now, Tayo, is your prisoner at-tir'd?

TAYO enters.

Tayo. He is equipped in your old fighting doublet, and twin was never more like to twin than he to you. Here are his clothes, what shall be done with these?

Ped. Here, sirrah! take them in your charge, and wait for me with Tayo on the outside of the cave. Roca and Cerbero are at their mess. Hold yourself ready, and above all be silent! Away, dispatch, you know the rendezvous—Tayo, be faithful!

Tayo. Never fear me, captain.

[Exeunt Tayo and Fortunio.]

Ped. What means this trepidation at my heart? Henrique, come forth! *[Goes to the grate.]* Why am I thus? Pity can never move me, fear never yet approach'd me, and as for Nature, they who reduced me to this desperate state, cut all her kindred ties at once asunder—Henrique, I say, come forth!

[Goes again to the grate.]

HENRIQUE *enters.*

Hen. Sure I have heard that voice—Defend me, Heaven! it is my brother, it is he, 'tis Pedro—

Ped. Well, it is Pedro.

Hen. Then I am lost, inevitably lost.

Ped. Do you hold me so implacable?

Hen. What mercy can I look for from a robber?

Ped. Do you call me robber? who is robb'd if I am not? If, driven by dire necessity, I have enlisted myself with robbers, rather than starve and die for want of charity, what man with half a soul wou'd cast it in my teeth? Who but wou'd pity me? The very judge, that by the law was destin'd to condemn, wou'd in his heart acquit me; methinks, Don Henrique, brother for brother might do more than this.

Hen. Be witness, Heaven, how ardently I've pray'd for your conversion, Pedro.

Ped. Sir, I don't need your prayers: I, like yourself, am but in habit, not in heart, a robber. Do you think the comforts of a life like this are such as I should covet? The brutal manners of this desperate crew, are they congenial to my nature? No; whatever devil's name they may fix on me, whatever title malice may assign me, as captain of these robbers, I am none, but a poor prisoner, caught like yourself in their infernal snares, and made, against my will, to share their dangers.

Hen. If this be so, oh Pedro, I conjure thee break off at once from this abandon'd gang; fly from this bloody den, and share my fortune.

Ped. What is your fortune, Henrique? A poor student at Salamanca, the small pittance on

which you live, wou'd hardly furnish scraps to a tame jack-daw.

Hen. True, but our wealthy uncle, Valdesoto, who has so long been governor of Mexico, is now return'd, and had not this mischance befallen me in the forest, I had met him ere now by his appointment—I have here his letter, which gives me flattering promises.

Ped. Produce it.

Hen. Hah! how is this? They made me change my clothes, and in my hurry I have overlook'd it. 'Tis in the pocket of my scholar's habit.

Ped. Well then, it will be found, when we are clear of these banditti: I contrived this dress for your escape out of the cave, and have secured your clothes.

Hen. And do you mean in very earnest, Pedro, to rescue me from this infernal place?

Ped. Ah! can you doubt it? Am I not your brother? Is nature nothing? Can you suppose affection dead within me? Come come, divest yourself of this unjust suspicion. Cloak up your face, and slouch your hat over your eyes. That's well! Now ask a blessing of your patron saint, and Heaven be with us!

Hen. Oh my protector, oh my long-lost brother, let me this once enfold you in my arms, and tell you—

Ped. Come, 'tis well; when we are safe we will let loose our hearts—I do not like this hugging, it annoys me. [*Aside.*] Give me your arm—Tread softly and be silent. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CERBERO and ROCA.

Cer. Roca! come hither, lad! You see I'm sober, I'm steady in my trim; you're by the head; that is, as if I had said—drunk, Roca, most incontinently drunk. Therefore, do you see, 'tis fit that I shou'd speak, and that you should say nothing, that is—hold your tongue and keep the fool at home. Tayo's a villain—I've said it, let that pass. Lopez and Martin are sugar-sops, egg-suckers—therefore they swing in couples—Holla! you are asleep.

Roca. You lie, I do but nod.

Cer. Good words! be civil, Roca; you had best. Now mind me—That's the grating—behind it is the cage, and in it a bird, that, if we let him forth, will whistle us to the hangman—Here, Roca, take this tool, and do his business, Roca—Get you gone!

Roca. Do it yourself; not I.

Cer. Slave, do you mutiny?

Roca. No, I rebel.

Cer. What's that but mutiny in better language? Will you not do this trick?

Roca. I tell you, no.

Cer. Why then I'll do't myself — You're drunk and pitiful--Holla! how is this? the bird is flown.

Roca. I cou'd have told you that, but you are a fool and sober; I'm drunk and wise withal. Our captain has him: Diabolo has spirited him away.

Cer. Oh then he is safe: Diabolo's a quick workman, and so sure, that he wou'd not spare his brother, though he had twinn'd with him; he blinks at nothing but petticoats; there is his weakness; we have all our failings—Drink is

your vice, 'abominable drink—there's your blind side; I've warn'd you of it, Roca, but to no purpose. Come, we'll go and take a quieting siesta—Oh drink, drink will be your poison, Roca—Mind, I've told you. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene.--The Forest.

PEDRO enters hastily, his sword drawn, follow'd by FORTUNIO.

Ped. I've done the deed. Fortunio, page, where are you? Art sure I have dispatch'd him?

For. Oh! too sure. Ah Pedro, Pedro, you've a heart of stone.

Ped. I have a heart that is not worth the owning, a coward's heart, that quails, I know not why. Did you not mark how my hands shook, Fortunio? What cou'd that mean? It never shook before. Sure I have struck him short—Turn back, good friend, and finish what I've left undone.

For. I cannot, master, by my soul, I cannot. In this, and only this, I cannot obey you. Be satisfied you have destroy'd the living, urge not my nature to a deed so horrid as to deface the dead.

Ped. Dead, are you sure he's dead?

For. Look at your sword. How can you doubt if that blood-stain'd point has reach'd his heart?

Ped. Can you behold this weapon in my hand and not abhor me? Do you not curse the hour when first you saw me?

For. I wou'd, but cannot. Though I behold you bathed in a brother's blood, horrible sight! yet love, unconquerable love, impels me to you,

and I wou'd rather encounter death itself than quit you.

Ped. You are a mad wench—but look ! we are encounter'd, stand behind me.

Enter Count de VALDESOTO, GOMEZ, and Servants.

Count. Who and what are you, stranger ?

Ped. Who are you that ask ?

Count. Who am I ? that's a pretty question, truly. Can't you discern ? I wonder at your blindness. Where are my fellows ? Gomez, discuss my titles.

Gom. Stranger, whoe'er you are, you here behold the most illustrious Don Vincente de Rascafia, Count de Valdesoto, grandee of the first order, knight of the golden fleece, viceroy of Mexico, and general of the armies of his most Catholic Majesty--

Ped. I'm satisfied.

Count. So am not I with you for stopping him ; let him fetch breath, and he'il go on afresh.

Ped. I know your titles, noble Count, and know how worthily you wear them, having the honour, excellent Valdesoto, to call myself your nephew.

Count. Then you may chance to call yourself a devil, for I have a nephew, Pedro, goes by that title.

Ped. I'm sorry I must say he well deserves it. I blush to speak of him ; Heaven knows how long I struggled to reform him, but in vain ; I dare not now be known to be his friend ; all men avoid him, those especially who travel o'er this heath with charge of money : your Excellency, I am sure, wou'd not be pleased to meet him.

Count. Rascal, I never wish to see his face.

Ped. No, Sir, it is not safe to see his face; besides, so many other faces follow him, that it wou'd scare a troop of horse to meet him. I, his own brother Henrique, have escap'd him, as 'twere, by miracle.

Count. Are you, indeed, Don Henrique, and my nephew? I must have proof of that.

Ped. Sir, that I am your nephew, this, your own gracious letter, which I treasure with most devout respect, will fully testify.

Count. Humph! let me see. You are,—you are my nephew: this is my letter sure enough, and you can be none else than my adopted Henrique—Welcome, welcome! Yes, yes, I might have seen it in your face; your father to a tittle, true Rascafria stamped upon your forehead—but come, we'll tarry in this place no longer: I left my coach, and came into this thicket, hearing a cry of murder.

Ped. It was my page that cried to me for help. We were beset by robbers—I was at swords with them, hard press'd by odds, when at your approach they fled.

Count. You say your brother Pedro is about; perhaps it was that villain that attacked you.

Ped. I cannot tell, Sir. I almost suspect it, but I am loth to call my brother—villain.

Count. He is a villain, call him how you will—a harden'd villain, steel'd against humanity.

Ped. Bad company and bad examples will corrupt the best of natures. I must hope at least he was not of the party that assail'd me; for if he was, I may have innocently slain my brother in self-defence.

Count. Did you not see his face? You must know that.

Ped. As perfectly as my own ; but these banditti, Sir, had masked their faces. Alas ! my heart is heavy.

Count. Come, come, I'll carry you to happier scenes, where a fair Mexican shall smile upon you, whose beauty shall dispel these gloomy thoughts. This way— *[Exit attended.]*

Ped. Fortunio, follow me ! The corpse, the corpse, how shall we hide the corpse ?

[Exeunt Pedro and Fortunio.]

Scene.—Another part of the Forest.

NICOLAS and BENEDICTA.

Nic. Cross yourself, Benedicta ! cross yourself, good dame, as I do. Danger makes me devout : I wonder at you.

Ben. What danger shou'd I fear, being old and poor ?

Nic. Why poor and old are good preservatives from robbery and ravishment. But what if we shou'd chance upon Diabolo ! These are his haunts.

Ben. Well, let them be his haunts : he's not so mere a devil as to molest aged women.

Nic. No, who the devil wou'd ! Ah ! what is that. *[Discovers Don Henrique on the ground.—]*

Ben. Mercy protect the man ! He's dead or dying.

Nic. I'm glad of it with all my heart—Stone dead, I hope ; for by this blessed light, if ever I beheld Diabolo, that's he.

Ben. Well, be it who it may, he needs our charity, for see he stirs, there's life in him.

Nic. Give me your crutch then, and I'll beat it out of him.

Hen. Oh, for the love of mercy, staunch my wound.

Ben. There, there, you hear him supplicate for mercy, can you withhold it? You, a surgeon too.

Nic. Yes, but I do not covet such a patient. Are you quite sure he's wounded? Who can tell but he may play some devil's trick upon us? And if the devil and the doctor wrestle, I can well guess which of them will come to the ground first. Ask where he's wounded.

Hen. Oh my side, my side.

Nic. Which side? for as I take it you have two, not to name one which I will not speak of.

Hen. My left side.

Nic. Fear nothing, then, for on that side your heart lies, and steel will not cut steel; no sword can pierce it, impenetrable Diabolo.

Hen. I'm not Diabolo; you do me wrong. I am Don Henrique; Diabolo's my brother, and has murder'd me.

Nic. Ah, now I've done with you: if you persist in your old trick of lying, I am off.

Hen. Indeed, indeed, I'm not Diabolo.

Nic. My humble service to you. Cure yourself; as if I did not know that old buff jerkin—If you won't own the truth, I will not touch you.

Hen. I have spoken the truth.

Nic. Then it must be when you were drunk, not now—but come, I see you really wounded; confess yourself Diabolo, and I'll dress you: if not, good day to you. I'll take my leave.

Ben. Oh ! Nicolas, how can you turn away from a poor bleeding creature ! Wretched man, whoe'er you are, humour his obstinacy, and call yourself Diabolo.

Hen. Dress me, and call me what you will. I faint—

Nic. Oho ! you're come back to the truth at last—Now then, drink this, 'twill cheer your spirits, Señor Diabolo, and I'll make bold the whilst to probe your ribs—Dear heart, dear heart ! how sad a wound is this ?

Ben. Alas, alas, poor creature ! Is it mortal ?

Nic. You are, and so am I, but not this wound, nor he that owns it. The worse luck ours that must abide his stay longer amongst us—So ! raise him up—How do you find yourself now ?

Hen. Better, much better ; 'tis a Christian office.

Nic. I am not quite sure of that, but this I'll say—there's not a barber-surgeon in all Castile, that can come near me for a simple puncture : marry, if it comes to your zig-zaggery amongst the small guts, liver, lungs, and sweet-bread, I wash my hands of it. I'm not a man to play at bo-peep with mortality. As for a fresh cut on the chin, or so, particularly if it be a cut of my own making, I cure it instantly by the first intention.

Ben. See, he revives—'Tis a good work, however ; if he be wicked, he may live to mend—if good, the world will profit by our pains. My cottage is hard by—Had we a rug or blanket, we cou'd lift him thither, at least I'd strive for it.

Hen. Kind soul, if I survive, I'll not forget

you—but I believe my strength will serve me to creep along with your assistance slowly—Now raise me on my legs—Ah! I am giddy—support me! Thanks, thanks! Your charity has saved my life.

Nic. If Dunstan was a saint for cudgelling the devil, I doubt I shan't be canoniz'd for curing him.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

The Castle of the Count de Valdesoto.

PEDRO *alone.*

Ped. Oh ! Fernando Cortez, coud'st thou come on earth, what woud'st thou say to see thy Mexico govern'd by such an ass, as Valdesoto ! Oh, 'tis a precious gull, whose only wit lies in his coffers ; his excellency at least has lin'd those well, and I, good hope, shall find a trick to lighten them. How now, Fortunio !

FORTUNIO *enters.*

Make fast the door ; I have a word for you.

For. And I for you, and women's words are mblest ; therefore I first demand if you intend to marry this Sultana of the Indies ?

Ped. Yes ; no ; I care not which—Why do you ask ?

For. Because, if such your purpose, and you mean to establish me in office, as her cup-bearer, or page of the chamber, or any other near authority, which gives me access to her vice-royal Majesty, I shall set both these claws into her face, and tear her eyes out.

Ped. How now, you foolish thing, art thou grown jealous of me on the sudden ?

For. Gracious Saint Catherine, can you affect that puppet, that doll, that figure upon wires, whose eyes are beads set in a waxen mask ?—

What is their language, what do they express ?
Ah, Pedro, what one emotion do they inspire ?

Ped. Get thee gone, gypsey ! dost thou think that I can spy out beauties in the works of Nature ? They are all blank to me, and human clay is but in progress to become a part of the base soil we tread on ; will nothing cure thee of this foolish trick of loving one, who has not time to waste on such a baby passion ?

For. Why, if I do not love thee for thy virtues, (which wou'd indeed be folly,) where's the harm ?

Ped. Where is the harm ? To love, wou'd be perdition beyond what language yet has found a name for ; I shou'd affright thee, torture thee, destroy thee, laugh at thy miseries, make thy pains my sport, and rend thy heart with anguish from thy bosom—No, when you held your pistol to my head, and menac'd me with death, I thought you noble, worthy to be my mistress and my friend ; our natures seem'd congenial to each other ; but if you sink into a whining lover, I scorn you, loathe you, hate you for your meanness, that can descend to doat upon a murderer, stain'd with a brother's blood.

For. The devil, they say, lays by his natural shape when he wou'd tempt poor sinners ; you, Diabolo, make yourself horrible, and yet you charm me.

Ped. Begone ! I wou'd be private : urge me not. [*Exit. Fortunio.*] What shall I do ? face fortune, or fly from it ? Where is the hazard if I stand my ground and wed this Mexican ? My brother Henrique, unambitious, patient, and buried in his study, was not known without his college gates at Salamanca. He led a frugal life, maintained no servants, courted no friends,

a solitary being—Relations we have none; our noble stock was stript to its last living branch, and that my fratricidal hand lopt from the trunk; I only, murderous wretch, blighted myself, and blighting all around me, I survive to counterfeit his name, and act a devil's part under the mask of virtue.

Count de VALDESOTO enters.

Count. Why, how now, Henrique! musing—melancholy? Methinks 'twere time for you to throw aside your Salamanca airs of gravity, and welcome this good fortune that awaits you. What ails you? What disturbs you? Is it your late rencounter in the forest?

Ped. I do confess it dwells upon my mind.

Count. Why so it seems—if you had been the robber and not the robb'd, there had been cause for it. The conscience of a murderer never cast a deeper gloom upon the human face than yours betray'd last night. Your cousin, Celestina, was so shock'd with your pale, ghastly looks, that when you parted from her, you impress'd such horrors on her fancy, as haunted her in sleep with hideous dreams.

Ped. I also dreamt, yet slept not.

Count. You dreamt and slept not—What is it you mean?

Ped. Answer me first—cou'd you forgive the man who kill'd your nephew, though in his own defence?

Count. Whom do you speak of? Pedro?

Ped. The same.

Count. Why he's a villain, is he not? a robber, the terror and execration of all Spain—A wretch so lost to all humanity, that nothing but

the infernal devil himself cou'd give a name to him. Do you call him my nephew? Shew me the man that will put that monster out of existence, and I'll embrace him as the best of friends.

Ped. Say, had I done it, me wou'd you embrace?

Count. Joyfully, cordially.

Ped. I did not dare to tell you this at first, but 'twas my sad mischance, as I was travelling across the forest, to be assaulted by three murderous villains, mask'd and unknown—I stood to my defence, and slew their leader; the two miscreants fled—When, horror to my sight! I drew the crape from the dead robber's face, and saw my brother, my brother Pedro—

Count. Where is the body, what is become of that?

Ped. Oh, name it not—The robbers took that off, and doubtless buried it within their cave.

Count. How cou'd that be? You said but now the robbers fled.

Ped. I did so; I did say they fled—but soon, when I withdrew, not able to behold a spectacle so piteous, they came back and took the body off—My page conceal'd himself, and saw them do it. Therefore, for Heaven's sweet sake, if you respect my peace, or that of your fair daughter, make no stir, press no enquiry, let the remembrance of this luckless deed die with the wretched being now no more.

Count. Fear me not: if he will keep his cave, I'll not disturb his ashes to disgrace the name of Rascafria.

Ped. What cou'd I do? In self-defence I fought, I knew not Pedro; me he knew too well, and urg'd his blood-hounds on with horrid

cries. I wrapt my cloak about my arm to shield me; his rapier hung in it. I seized the opening—fatal advantage! and transfix'd his heart—Mine is weigh'd down with sorrow ever since.

Count. Then here comes one shall weigh it up again—Here is your comforter, keep your own secret, say not a word to Celestina of it—Now mark with what a sweetness she will greet us!

CELESTINE enters.

How now, my child, what ails thee? Why are your eyes bent upon the ground? Do not you see your cousin?

Cel. Yes, Sir, I see Don Pedro.

Count. You dream, you dream. Why do you call him Pedro? he is Henrique, and not Pedro.

Cel. Did I say Pedro? sure enough I dream: forgive me, cousin; how are you this morning? Your looks were pale last night, haggard and pale; as if your mind was torn with thoughts that hurried it beyond itself.

Ped. Indeed, sweet cousin, I was ill at ease.

Cel. I'm sure you was, for as you led me to the supper-room, your hand burnt like the living charcoal; my poor glove was blister'd with the touch of it.

Ped. Who can be temperate, cool, and undisturb'd, in the full blaze of beauty that burst on me?

Cel. Do they teach flowery rhetoric in your college?

Ped. I speak as Nature prompts me; if my language swells above academic diction, wonder not—Love is an eloquent master.

Count. Good, very good! *Love is an eloquent master*—and with that master's help I doubt not

but you'll rise in your profession, so now I commend you to each other—Daughter, you know my wishes; cherish them—There is no Rascafria now surviving, but that good virtuous youth with whom I leave you. [*Exit.*]

Cel. What did my father say at parting from us? Did you hear what he said?

Ped. Something but not distinctly.

Cel. No Rascafria living but yourself—was it not so?

Ped. I think it was.

Cel. What is become of your unhappy brother?

Ped. They say that he is dead.

Cel. Who killed him?

Ped. How shou'd I know? Has any one possessed you that I did it?

Cel. Possessed me! no; Heaven's Providence forbid it! Why I am thus rapt I'll tell you, if you'll spare a patient ear to my strange narrative.

Ped. Perhaps it is a dream you'll tell me of—such I take small account of.

Cel. Is it a dream? but I perceive my father has been telling it.

Ped. He told me you were troubled in your sleep, but how, he did not say.

Cel. I'll tell you then—It was a dreadful vision. Methought I saw Don Henrique on the ground, stabb'd to the heart.

Ped. Hah! stabb'd—be satisfied, you see I live.

Cel. Ah! 'twas not you I saw upon the ground—You told me in my dream that you was Pedro—forgive me this allusion—Pale, horror-struck, and bathed in blood, you stood over the body, and confess'd yourself the murderer of your brother.

Ped. 'Tis false, it is a lie black as hell, and he that visited your thoughts in sleep was the great devil himself—When you have shook him from you, and your deluded spirit shall regain its natural tranquillity, I shall be glad to welcome your recovery, and breathe my humble homage at your feet. [*Exit.*]

Cel. He's strangely mov'd—this dream, this horrid dream—I cannot shake it from my thoughts. His countenance, when first we met, was frightful; it was not Nature's doing, for his features are, like his form, cast in her finest mould; but yet the power of first impressions is so great, that I shall never conquer them to love him.—

FORTUNIO runs in and stops suddenly.

How now, whom seek ye?

For. I thought my master had been here—pray pardon me.

Cel. Stay, if you please—You are Don Henrique's page; your name Fortunio. Have you served him long?

For. All time seems short in such a gentle service.

Cel. Were you at Salamanca with your master, when he was there a student?

For. Wherever he has been, I have been with him, and wheresoever he shall be hereafter, my sole ambition is to attend him ever.

Cel. You have learnt your lesson; you can flatter, I perceive.

For. I cannot flatter, madam, whilst praising my good master.

Cel. Is he indeed so good?

For. He's good to all; to me, above the rest, as meriting so little.

Cel. Oh, you're too modest.

For. I hope, indeed, I've too much fear of shame to act dishonestly, which I shou'd do, if I withheld my praise, when speaking of the virtues of Don Henrique.

Cel. Being so virtuous, why is he so sad, sullen, and choleric?

For. Ah, madam! do you ask me of the cause, being yourself so able to discern it.

Cel. I think, indeed, he has something that weighs heavy at his heart.

For. He has in truth; I tremble for the consequences.

Cel. Some mental malady, some conscious ailment—

For. Ah! you have found it; what is so oppressive as fear and terror?

Cel. Come, come, Fortunio, you know the secret; trust it with me; I never will betray you, and as an earnest of my future favour, take this, 'twill serve you for some gallant present to the fair nymph you favour. [Gives money.]

For. I humbly thank you—Oh, 'tis all too much.

Cel. Now tell me what it is disturbs your master.

For. Then, madam, in one word, to speak the truth—love is his only torment, that it is which racks his heart and weighs his spirit down, that else were light as innocence can make it.

Cel. Away, away, prevaricating knave, I've done with you. [Exit.]

For. I'm heartily content to have done with you, proud Mexican. Bad as Don Pedro is, I'll not betray him; and though I see discovery

will ensue, if I cannot persuade him to avoid it, I'll share it with him, and we'll fall together,
[Exit.]

Scene changes to the cottage of Benedicta.

DON HENRIQUE *led in by* BENEDICTA.

Hen. Ah ! this is pleasant ; here we catch the breeze ; it comes with healing freshness o'er my breast. Here I'll sit down—Come hither, worthy dame ! how do you call those lofty hills before us, whose heads are cap't with snow ?

Ben. Those are the Guadaramas ; beyond them lies Segovia, the capital of Castile, and near to that the royal Sitio of St. Ildephonso.

Hen. That's well, it shews to what a height ambition mounts ere it can reach its goal ; but does that towering road lead to content ? No ; mark how wintry cold those summits are. Perpetual snows, thick clouds, and barren rocks, swept by the howling tempest, crown their heads, whilst in your lowly cot benignant Nature smiles, and peace and charity fix here their calm abode.

Ben. Sure this can never be that wretch, Diabolo. Let Nicolas say what he will, I'll not believe it. [*Aside.*] I am glad to find your spirits so composed, that you can moralize over the scene ; your habit, I confess, does not accord with such sentiments.

Hen. Nor does your language with the poor vocation that you pursue : I shou'd suppose that we have both known our better days ; you were not always what you seem, a peasant, nor am I what you take me for, a robber.

Ben. No, no, I cannot think you'd play the

hypocrite so grossly, and with me, who, if you were what Nicolas insists on, Diabolo himself, wou'd not withhold the hand of pity from a fellow creature, found in the like distress that I found you.

Hen. I have told you once the truth, for then I thought my life at issue; now when I revive, by your kind charity, I do not wish to unfold my story further, for my revenge goes not the length to take away his life, who has attempted mine. If Heaven restores me, time, that shall prove my gratitude, shall vindicate my character—but tell me, have I not conjectured rightly of your past days.

Ben. Alas, my days have passed in heaviness and sorrow, sure enough—Heaven's will be done! My husband was a trader, and dwelt at Cadiz when the last war broke out with England, of which country he was a native, as I also am; our then governor, O'Reilly, shame to his cruelty, seized all his papers, shut him in a prison, and treated him with such severity, that there, alas! he died, and left me helpless, heart-broken, destitute, bereft of every means but this poor craft to earn a livelihood.

Hen. Oh sorrowful disaster! deep affliction! what kind protecting saint enabled you to bear such keen misfortune?

Ben. Ah, Sir, I do not mock your saints, but I appeal not to them: I am not of your faith, nor was my husband.

Hen. Whatever faith you are of, I can believe it must be pure, benign, and holy—but see, we are interrupted—

NICOLAS *enters.*

Nic. Well, how do we go on? has the last dressing swag'd the pains which your infernal majesty complain'd of?

Hen. The conversation of this gentle creature, has almost heal'd my wounds.

Nic. That's a new remedy—a dog's tongue, methinks, wou'd lick 'em whole before a woman's talk—Hold out your hand, I'll feel your worship's pulse.

Ben. Well, Nicolas, how is it?

Nic. Wondrous calm, considering who owns it.

Ben. Come, leave off this suspicious raillery—You err egregiously, good friend, when you suppose this cavalier a robber.

Nic. Never tell me; what wou'd the criminal judge say to that jerkin? He'd jerk him with a witness.

Ben. Aye, or without a witness, were he like some judges I have met with.

Nic. Look how 'tis hackt and hew'd! What do you think those pretty cuts and carbonadoes wou'd depose, if their dumb mouths cou'd utter?

Hen. Let him that owns them answer. I'm not bound to father his performances.

Nic. I have news for you, Diabolo, news from Segovia—I met a servant of your uncle Valdesoto: he perfectly believes you dead and buried. I humour'd him in this, for why? My neck had else paid for the crime of curing you. Moreover, your brother Henrique is arrived amongst them.

Hen. Are you quite sure of that?

Nic. Fact, as I tell you, fact! and more than that—See what you lose by your infernal courses! He is to marry Count Valdesoto's daughter, the Lady Celestina.

Hen. The Lady Celestina! It is too much! to be silent wou'd be meanness! Answer me this—Can you convey me to Segovia?

Nic. Impossible! you'd die by the way, your wound wou'd open, and you'd bleed to death.

Hen. Will you then be the bearer of a letter? And will you faithfully deliver it? I will reward you. Money I have none; the robbers pillaged me of that—but I conceal'd this watch. It was my father's; but it shall go to save my family from ignominy, and my wretched brother, if possible, from death. Give him my letter, and this watch is yours.

Nic. So you will let me see what 'tis I carry! read me your letter first, but sign it not with your name, Pedro—That's a death warrant on the face of it.

Hen. Have you materials, my good dame, for writing?

Ben. I have; they are at hand, and here's a table. [*He writes*] Now, Nicolas, can you suppose this man wou'd sign himself to his own destruction?

Nic. Stop, mark me. I shall proceed with caution; if 'tis incendiary, I touch it not; if safe, I am his man.

Ben. My life upon it, Nicolas, he's innocent.

Nic. Well, dame, that's your opinion, keep it.

Hen. I have written — Attend! [*Reads.*]
“Your sword has miss'd its aim, and I survive.
“Fly, wretched man, I do not seek revenge;
“fly, and avoid the ignominious fate, which
“else awaits you. HENRIQUE DE RASCAFRIA.”

Here, satisfy yourself that I have read it faithfully. *[Gives him the letter.]*

Nic. I'm satisfied. Henrique de Rascafria—and not Pedro—I spy no danger here.

Hen. Give it to him that calls himself Don Henrique. Swear to me this, and by to-morrow's dawn, I will be there myself. So now 'tis seal'd—Will you be faithful, Nicolas, and give it as I tell you?

Nic. I'll do it, never fear me, I'll do it. Won't you direct it?

Hen. No, if he sees my writing on the cover, perhaps he'll not peruse it—Come, dispatch!

Nic. I'm gone—Your watch shall not count many hours ere I return to you. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV.

Scene.—An Apartment.

PEDRO *and* FORTUNIO.

Ped. Here, here! take this and get thee hence for ever—I shall grow fond of thee and be a fool.

For. I will not take your money nor your warning: your fate I'll share whatever it may be.

Ped. I am your friend; be counsell'd. I shall love you, if you stay longer with me; then you are lost.

For. I care not: you but spend your breath in vain. You cannot terrify me.

Ped. Heroic girl! stout as I thought my heart, and deep entrench'd out of the reach of love, yet thou hast found it—take it for thy pains—am I Pedro? have I unmov'd beheld that giant Death, and can this little gypsey overthrow me? Was it for this I slew my brother Henrique? By sea and earth thou hast undone my fame. If I were wise, I should this instant kill thee.

For. Do, kill me! I'll not falter.

Ped. You've marr'd my fortune, blasted my ambition, turn'd me aside out of the road to virtue, and made me ten times more devil than before. If it were not for you, seducing imp, I shou'd have married, been a tame good husband, and led a holy edifying life, but now—

For. What now?

Ped. The fire of thy affection has so scorch'd me, that I can never quit thee for the snow of that cold Celestina: I renounce her; and ere to-morrow's sun shou'd call me up to execute the odious task of marriage, I will begone, fast as the fleetest horse in old Valdesoto's stables can bear me off—And thou shalt follow me.

Far. Viva! Couragio! Liberty and Love!

Ped. Mark me! This night I meditate a deed, what it shall be I know not yet distinctly—but a bold one, a bloody one perhaps—Provide my chamber with a lamp; I shall not sleep. Hold yourself armed, and ready equipped to mount—horses will be in waiting.

For. You'll not forget wherewith to make them go—Gold will not overload us; jewels are light of carriage, but remember, Pedro, let us have no more murder; beware cruelty, it is a burden that breaks the conscience down to carry it.

Ped. Away, away—a truce with your admonitions—My uncle's coming. [*Exit Fortunio.*]

VALDESOTO enters.

Count. Henrique, I know your father was not rich, that prodigal, your brother, stript him bare—therefore take this, 'twill serve to purchase ribands for wedding favours; I'll have the marriage private to-morrow—Look! I've a casket here of bridal jewels—some have been long heir-looms of our house; others, and those the best, are newly purchased. You'll understand that these are for your use, (you'll have enough without them,) your bride will grace them in the wearing—but they shall be your present,

and not mine ; therefore, I pass them through your hands to her's.

Ped. I am confounded with your bounty, Sir, and humbly on my knee pay you my thanks, not for these gifts alone, but more than all, for the possession of a beauteous bride, your lovely Celestina, at whose feet I shall to-morrow offer up this treasure, with most profound devotion.

Count. Enough, nephew, enough ; less rhetoric will go farther ; you must lay by your college declamation, and speak not from your books, but from your heart, Don Henrique.

Ped. Yet when the heart's too full, it needs must overflow.

Count. Why that's well said, but I'll tell you now how you shall make your way with Celestina—Be not too choice in words, for that's pedantic ; be easy, yet not bold in your advances, free, but not forward, loving, but not loose—I have known those who hit this happy mean—but they were not to be found at Salamanca—Come, you shall put that casket safely by in your chamber, and then pay your court to Celestina.

Ped. Now, fortune, I defy thee ! [*Aside.*]

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene.—The Plaza Mayor in Segovia.

NICOLAS alone.

Nic. A plague upon these people of Segovia ! they have no curiosity to know how time goes o'er their heads. What is it to a man like me that is conscious of wearing a gold watch in his fob, if nobody that he meets asks him what o'clock it is ?

Enter Countryman.

Countr. Hah ! master Nicolas, well met i'faith : I've sought you up and down, hobbling in pain over this crabbed pavement a full hour.

Nic. An hour do you say ? I'll tell you to a minute, a second, how time goes—my watch corrects the sun—

Countr. Correct yourself, friend—put up your watch, and take out your paring knife ; I am even crippled with a throbbing corn, that cries out to be cut.

Nic. Cut it yourself ; I cannot listen to your crying corn : I've other work in hand.

Enter another Countryman.

2d Countr. Come along, Nicolas, I'm glad I've found you ; my dame is none of the most patient bodies, and she is madden'd with a raging tooth, that you must lay to rest. Have you your tools about you ? Come, make haste, there's not a minute to be lost—

Nic. Friend, here is that which never lost a minute, and I am just as covetous of time as you can be ; therefore, I must away to Valdesoto's, where my first business lies.

2d Countr. Why how now, shaver, do you think to fob us by shewing us your watch ?

Nic. Fob you ! no, no, my friends, I'll not do that, but with your leave, I will secure my watch—I have a fob for that.

BASCO enters.

Bas. Bless the good hour! why this is luck indeed: I've jump'd upon you in the very nick: I thought, friend Nicolas, I thought this was about the time of day to meet you in the Praça Mayor.

Nic. Did you enquire about the time of day, my merry host? I believe I can tell you that correctly—my watch keeps time as constantly as your stomach.

Bas. Your watch, indeed! how came you by a watch, did Mariguita's money go for that?

Nic. What tell you me of Mariguita's money? You know which way that went; you had it back—'twas but a trick to teaze her.

Bas. Yes, yes, it was a trick, and you will find trick upon trick,

Nic. Who is it you are beck'ning to so earnestly?

Bas. Only to a worthy gentleman, who is a great admirer of your art, and wishes to be better acquainted with you.

IGNACIO enters.

Señor Ignacio, this is my friend, Nicolas Sassanigo, whom I was speaking of to you as one of the lightest-finger'd shavers, that ever took razor in hand. He is a man, as you, that goes handsomely, and lives well by his trade, carries a gold watch in his pocket, and plenty of coin; which some people are malicious enough to insinuate, he has not come honestly by.

Ign. Whatever he has about him he will be perfectly secure—tie this man's arms behind

him, he is a prisoner of the Holy Office—I arrest you, Nicolas Sassanigo, by virtue of this warrant from the Alguazil mayor of the supreme and general inquisition.

Nic. Arrest me! what have I done? I am innocent—Ah! merciful sir, I am only a poor shaver—

MARIGUITA enters hastily.

Marig. A shaver indeed! you are a robber, a thief, a stealer of consecrated money, a defrauder of the saints, a sacrilegious villain—Now we shall see, master Nicolas, when you are bound, who will deliver you. *[They bind his arms.]*

1st Countr. There, there! I thought what this vapouring fellow wou'd come to.

Nic. Mistress, you know I've not got your money, you know I am no thief—I took it, I confess, in sport, to be revenged for tricks of the like sort that you have plagu'd me. I stood but at your door till Bascó came, and then I gave him the whole sum entire—let him deny it if he can. Not a single maravedi did I hold back—let him depose against me and deny it. His conscience will not let him.

Bas. You are right, my conscience will not let me say you are an honest man, knowing you to be a thief, a sacrilegious knave, that robb'd my till of money dedicated to Saint Pedro.

Marig. Yes, please your reverence, to Saint Pedro ad Vincula, a needy saint, and one whose shrine does lack it.

Ign. Defraud a needy saint! 'tis worse than murder. What was the sum he took?

Marig. A gold King Philip with a hole punch'd through him, a token of my mother's—thirteen

mill'd dollars, forty maravedis, and a crook'd pisette of Carlos tercero—All this he took, upon my oath.

Igna. Holy Saint Francis ! does the sky hang over us ? Turn out his pockets ; see what he has about him : search for his papers—

Nic. Ah, Señor, I've no papers ; none, but one poor scrap of a letter—that is it ; you have it in your hand—

Igna. What have we here, sealed, and without direction ? This may confront— [*Reads.*]

“ Your sword has missed its aim ”—Humph ! are you thereabouts, my master ? “ Fly wretched man,” signed “ Henrique de Rascafria ”—Oh thou atrocious villain ! Here is that, which, added to thy other crimes, convicts thee of an attempt upon the life of the illustrious Henrique de Rascafria.

Bas. Look at his watch, I pray you, worthy Sir—He shew'd it boastfully to me but now—Good chance, but that may be Don Henrique's too.

Igna. [*Looks at the watch.*] Out alas ! this needs no other witness than his cypher here on the case — and here again his seal — Such evidence convicts at once—Go one of you to Valdesoto's palace, and summon Don Henrique to the Office.—Away with him ! take him hence ! The fathers are in council.

Nic. Ah ! what is truth, justice, or innocence, in such a court ? [*Exeunt.*]

[*Basco and Mariguita remain.*]

Bas. Gossip, a word with you ! you have gone too far ; this is a bloody business.

Marig. If 'tis a bloody business, master Joachin, whom but yourself have you to thank for it ? I only meant to frighten the poor

fellow: 'twas you that set the Alguazil upon him.

Bas. Aye, now I understand you perfectly. You have a prudent care of yourself, and a kind purpose to leave me in the danger. I am your very humble servant, good mistress Mariguita. Our partnership is at an end; you may take to your venta nueva; I'll take to my heels, and be off—so farewell! [*Exit Basco.*]

Marig. True gypsey to the bone—he has got the money, liv'd free quarters on my industry, and plundered me at last of all my lawful earnings. Ah, faithless wretch! Thank Heaven, at least, I am not married to him. [*Exit.*]

Scene changes to the Count Valdesoto's.

PEDRO enters, followed by FORTUNIO.

Ped. Fortunio, page, where are you?

For. Here, at your call.

Ped. Are my horses ready?

For. I wou'd you were as ready! we had been clear ere this: now 'tis too late. The Count is calling for you to accompany him.

Ped. What wou'd the Inquisition have with me? I'll not obey their summons.

For. How can you choose? and look, here is your uncle.

VALDESOTO enters.

Count. Come, bustle, Henrique! We must away, the holy office calls us.

Ped. What then? Your Excellency surely will not go upon the whistle of those saucy monks.

Count. Saucy, do you call them? Marry, I'm much beholden to their sauciness, for having found you out, nephew of mine!

Ped. What have they found of me?

Count. More than your modesty was pleased to speak of. A very high-flown act of sheer benovolence. There is a certain letter of your writing, sign'd with your name, Henrique de Rascafria, found on the person of one Sassanigo, who robb'd you in the forest of your watch, in which you charitably warn him, to make off and 'scape a hanging—This you never told me.

Ped. I know not how I shou'd. [*Aside.*

Count. But wherefore did you not? Mercy, although misplac'd, is amiable.

Ped. I had good cause why I concealed it from you. I'm not a man to talk of my good deeds.

Count. No, so it seems. But yet you see they cannot long lie hid; the world will find you out for what you are, and then you'll blush for it—So come along!

Ped. Fortune, I thank thee; I have got my cue. [*Aside.*] [*Exeunt.*

The Court of Inquisition. The Council are seated, the President at the head of the table.

IGNACIO in attendance, and other subordinate Officers.

Presid. The court is full. Bring in the prisoner. I have a paper here in hand, my lords, which makes this criminal the direst wretch that ever Spain gave birth to—A dreadful catalogue—Theft, murder, sacrilege, are here set

down against him — So, officers, is this your prisoner?

Ign. This the man, so please your Excellency.

[*Nicolas is brought in between two officers.*]

Presid. Now, fellow, what is your name?

Nic. Nicolas Sassanigo is my name.

Presid. Where was you born, and where do you reside?

Nic. The village of Cornejo is my birth-place, and there is my abode.

Presid. A bachelor, or married man?

Nic. Neither, a widower — the worse luck mine.

Presid. What calling do you follow, except that for which you stand accused?

Nic. I shave the beards of such as trust me with them, and heal, with Nature's help, such petty ailments, as my small art can deal with.

Presid. I fear your art is rather to make wounds than heal them.

Nic. So please your Reverence, I know my danger, when false and cruel men accuse me to you, but, by the truth that's in me, I am innocent, a creature pitiful by nature even to weakness, so sparing of life, I have not the heart to kill the gnat that stings me.

Presid. Come, we've enough of this, and proof enough what you can do — Will you pretend to say that you are guiltless of spilling Christian blood?

Nic. Being a shaver, Sir, and having chins most crooked and mishapen under my hands at times, I will not say that I have never drawn the blood of Christian man: but I have heal'd him instantly for nothing, and when I cut, I cure — Who can do more?

Presid. You are pleasant, Nicolas—Are you aware what peril you are in?

Nic. Oh yes, my lord, standing in presence of this holy court, I am duly sensible of all my danger, especially as I have nothing to oppose to what my accusers charge me with but innocence.

Presid. What do they charge you with? Confess your crimes, 'tis your best course.

Nic. My lord, if I had any crimes upon my conscience, they shou'd be at your service, and the court's—but it is hard that I, a true Castilian, shou'd be brought here to bar, upon the word of a notorious gypsey, for such he is who keeps the Venta nueva, and says I robb'd him, when, if he has any spark of honesty or conscience, he must know I did but take the money with one hand, and with the other in the moment after, gave it him, without suppression of a maravedi.

Presid. We have nothing but your word for this, whereas the hostess of the Venta nueva is on her oath.

Nic. So please you she is always on her oath; she never speaks without one, and when she lies the most, she swears the loudest.

Ign. My lord, the Count de Valdesoto, and his nephew Don Henrique de Rascafria, attend upon your summons.

Presid. Usher those noble persons into court.

Count de VALDESOTO and DON PEDRO are ushered in.

I pray your Excellency be seated: Is this your nephew, Don Henrique, my good lord?

Count. It is, my lord, and I am proud to own him.

Presid. Prisoner, you may account yourself most happy and most honoured in your trial, having such noble witnesses to appeal to, as never yet were called into this court, to testify to one of your degree.

Nic. My lord, I throw my life upon their honour, and with implicit confidence appeal to what they shall depose for or against me. I humbly pray the letter may be shewn, also the watch—If Don Henrique can say he either wrote the one, or own'd the other, I must abide the issue at my peril.

Presid. You have said it, now keep silence—wait the court. Señor Don Henrique de Rascafria, you have heard the prisoner at the bar—Look on him.

Pedro. I see him, Sir.

Presid. Be pleas'd to cast your eyes upon this paper—

Ped. I'm perfect in the paper.

Presid. Here is a watch found on the prisoner's person—Examine it, so please you—

Ped. It is familiar to me.

Count. Give it to me—This was my brother Henrique's; this is his cypher—this his seal—the whole is fresh in my remembrance.

Nic. I don't dispute the fact.

[*The President makes a sign for silence.*]

Presid. Señor Don Henrique, it is now the time that you shou'd tell the court here sitting, what you know touching the prisoner at the bar before you—And we conjure you, in the cause of truth, wave that compassion which is natural to you, and speak as justice and your conscience dictate.

Ped. Although my heart recoils, and I wou'd fain avoid a task so awful, (I had almost said so

agonizing to my feelings,) how can I choose? if you will have the truth, if you will wring it from my unwilling lips, I must obey — The prisoner at the bar I know full well by person, not by name—I have cause to know him—As I was journeying hither o'er the forest, I was beset by robbers—He was one.

Nic. I a robber? The hair upon your chin cannot say that my hand was ever on you.

Presid. Fellow, be silent! if you interrupt us, we shall remand you to your cell at once.

Ped. My lords, the sequel of this sad adventure, should I dilate it circumstantially, would touch my heart, my honour, in so sore a part, and plunge a noble house in such affliction, that I must hope you will require no more than serves to fix the guilt of an accomplice on this unhappy object in my sight—The watch is surely mine, and was my father's—I did not willingly bestow it on him, you may well suppose.

Nic. I do not say you did — Your brother gave it to me, your brother Pedro.

Count. My lords, I claim protection of the court—Pedro, of whom he speaks, is now no more.

Presid. Take him away—Lay the wretch in fetters—His limbs shall make atonement for his tongue.

Nic. I speak for truth, for justice, for my life.—Will you not hear me?

Presid. Hence with him! Away!

[*Nicolas is taken off.*]

Señor Don Henrique, you may now proceed—Speak of the letter.

Ped. Yes, if my heart will let me—These are scenes so new, and the obduracy of that bad man strikes with such horror, I can scarce pro-

ceed — As to this letter, of which I am the author, I must own my fault, the fault of mercy — thus the matter stands. I chanc'd upon him in the square this morning; though he had changed his dress, I knew his person; my weak heart relented, good my lords; I stept aside, and in my tablets wrote what is before you; his name I knew not, direction it has none, nor did it need it, for with my own hand I put it into his, and pass'd him by without a word — If I have erred, I erred upon the side of pity and compassion. I have done.

Presid. The evidence is clos'd. The culprit is convict — break up the court! Illustrious Valdesoto, we concur in thanking you and your noble kinsman, for this your quick compliance with our summons, and if the happy union shall take place, of which report has reach'd us, you may boast a son-in-law, in whom we spy no fault but too much mercy to a worthless being.

Count. He is indeed, an honour to my name — I humbly take my leave — Not a step farther, I implore your Excellency. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene, the Count's Mansion.

Enter the Count de VALDESOTO and CELESTINA.

Count. Now, my sweet darling, now my Celestina, I am the happiest father in all Castile, and to-morrow you will be the happiest bride in all Christendom. Oh! such a husband—such a soul for mercy—I cannot tell you half his virtues, child—Here sate the inquisitors, a dreadful row—there stood the criminal, a wretched dog—Don Henrique was call'd upon; he rose to speak; silence ensued, all eyes were fix'd upon him: my heart beat quick; he only was composed—calm, self-collected, eloquent—His voice, methought, was music in my ears—the court applauded, the very executioners shed tears—

Cel. And what befel the prisoner?

Count. Hang'd, drawn, and quarter'd—rack'd upon the wheel—thrown to the vultures—burial is too good for him.

Cel. Sir, Sir, you chill my blood—Did Henrique's evidence convict this prisoner?

Count. Yes; but for that the thumb-screw might have forced him.

Cel. Then let him sleep no more! What rest, what peace, what reconciliation can that being know whose silence cou'd have sav'd a soul alive: Repentance might have made that wretch a saint.

Count. How you run on! What gibberish

you are talking! as if Don Henrique was not merciful, forgiving, charitable, even to a fault—Why, child, you do not know how good he is! I have a proof of it, a precious relique, (I cou'd not choose but take it from the table: I hope the holy office will forgive me.) [*Shows the letter.*] Here, here! I've got the very manuscript, sign'd with his name, and by his own hand written, in which he warns the villain to escape. Was ever man so merciful? Robb'd, plunder'd, almost murder'd—yet forgive.

Cel. Oh let me have it! I shall be most happy to find myself unjustly prejudiced—Why this is well—this is, indeed, most merciful—What a fair hand he writes!

Servant enters, and delivers a letter to Valdesoto.

Count. What have we here? a letter—and from my nephew Henrique—leave the room—I'll read it to you, Celestina.

Cel. Oh! my foreboding heart.

[*Exit Servant.*

Count. Hush, hush! have patience! [*Reads.*]
 “Whilst I was detained by an accident, which
 “befel me on my road from Salamanca, a report
 “met me, that you were on the point of bestow-
 “ing my cousin Celestina upon a certain per-
 “son, who, from motives best known to himself,
 “thinks fit to assume my name. Conscious as
 “I am of my own unworthiness to aspire to that
 “high honour, I must take leave to warn you
 “of the false Don Henrique, whom, for family
 “reasons, I forbear to accuse, hoping you will
 “consent to favour his escape, before that
 “justice, to which he is amenable, and which
 “he can no otherwise avoid, than by immediate

“flight, shall overtake him. Yours, in all duty
“and devotion. HENRIQUE DE RASCAFRIA.”

“The bearer of this letter will explain particulars.”

I am cast into astonishment. What can my nephew mean by writing this? Whom does he point at as the false Don Henrique? and wherefore write at all: couldn't he tell me this by word of mouth? Send for him hither; he was at home but now.

Cel. Hold, Sir, if you please. It is not clear to me this letter comes from him that is your inmate.

Count. Look at the signature; examine the hand-writing; the letter in your hand and this in mine must certainly come from one and the same person. How can you doubt if Henrique wrote them both?

Cel. I do not doubt if he wrote one, but that he wrote them both; but have you any sample of his writing save this, for which we have nothing but his word?

Count. I never saw him write—What then?

Cel. Why then I fain wou'd recommend you to see the bearer of this letter, to whom you are referred for explanation.

Count. Who waits?

Servant enters.

How came you by this letter?

Ser. A woman, who says her name is Benedicta, brought it, and makes suit to be admitted to your Excellency.

Count. Admit her instantly. [*Exit Servant.*]
Here is some treachery, but we shall fathom it—

A woman brought the letter—that's suspicious ; I never yet knew a plot without a woman.

Celes. Ah, Sir, be patient with her, I beseech you. Look, here she comes—If truth was ever legibly impress'd upon the human face, I read it there. [*Aside.*

BENEDICTA enters.

Count. Now, mistress, were you the bearer of this letter ?

Ben. I was, so please your Excellency.

Count. And did my nephew, Henrique, who lives here under the roof with me, employ you to convey his letter to me.

Ben. No, Sir, the nephew who now harbours with you, is not the writer of that letter.

Count. How say you? not the writer of this letter ! Who, and what is he then ?

Ben. The infamous Don Pedro, the assassin—

Count. Hah ! have a care.

Ben. The assassin of his brother.

Cel. Oh my prophetic dream ! now, now it comes.

Ben. To his face I wou'd denounce him an assassin, and if he pretends he wrote a certain letter found on one Nicolas Sassanigo, whose life is now in peril of the inquisition, I'll swear I saw Don Henrique de Rascafria, pen every word of it in my poor cottage. This I will swear, so help me, Truth and Heaven.

Cel. If you saw Don Henrique write the letter, perhaps you can remember its contents.

Ben. The sense I'm sure I can, if not the words—"Your sword has miss'd its aim ; fly, "wretched man, I do not seek revenge."—That was the purport. It was addressed to the in-

human Pedro, but not directed—Mercy ill bestow'd.

Cel. You are correct. Behold, I have it here.

Ben. The very, very letter—this is it—To every word of this I pledge my oath, and to that oath my hopes of Heaven hereafter. My eye was never from the pen that wrote it.

President of the Inquisition enters, &c.

Presid. Noble Count Valdesoto, we felicitate you and ourselves, on the discovery of a most impious villain, who has deceived us both, having well nigh destroy'd a guiltless man, and betrayed this your daughter to her ruin. Much it concerns us, that a name illustrious as Rascafia, shou'd be dishonoured by a wretch so dire, so mere a devil in human shape as Pedro.

Count. Ah, my good lord, let not my name protect him: the hangman's welcome to my share in him. He has jewels of great value in his hands; let us arrest him instantly.

Presid. The law will take its course. Your nephew, Henrique, whose humanity dictated this letter, on which poor Sassanigo was suspected, has been before us, and may with every moment be look'd for here. In the mean time, we have invested every avenue about your house, by which the villain, Pedro, who is yet unconscious of his danger, might escape—And see, Don Henrique comes—behold a nephew worthy of your name.

DON HENRIQUE enters, led in by NICOLAS.

Hen. Wounded in mind and body, I approach you, illustrious Valdesoto, and wou'd ask per-

mission to call myself your nephew but that I think you must abhor to hear a name so fatally abused as Henrique—for the same reason, I dare hardly offer to pay my homage here.

Count. If I forbear to throw my arms about you, 'tis not because I am not proud to own you, but in consideration of the wound that monster most unnatural has given you.

Hen. Oh that I cou'd have screen'd him from detection, but justice, truth, and gratitude, compelled me to save the life of this poor guiltless man, on whom he wou'd have turn'd the punishment due to his offences.

Nic. I must needs say you wou'd have paid me scurvily for binding up your wound, if you had suffered me to swing as proxy for one, whose person will become the highest gibbet that has been rear'd since hanging was a fashion in Castile.

Presid. Come, be content, you are free. With your leave, Count, I wou'd consult apart with you, how we may now proceed against Don Pedro, with proper satisfaction to the laws, and yet, as far as justice will allow, rescue your noble race from public shame.

Count. Thanks to your Excellency, I will attend you—Daughter and nephew, we shall need your counsel. [*Exeunt Valdesoto and President.*]

Cel. What will become of this unhappy wretch?

Hen. Alas, I know not, but if I may guess, he will not stoop to ignominious death,—but fall by his own hand.

Cel. Sure 'twas the warning of my guardian angel, that filled me with such horror and aversion, from the first moment that my eye glanc'd on him.

Hen. I think that cruelty is not his nature: distress of circumstances, and desperation, have driven him to these courses, for supply to his extravagance and lawless passions.

Cel. Alas! you charitably strive to find some palliation for his wickedness, but 'tis in vain—Come, let us join my father.

[*Exeunt Henrique and Celestina.*]

Ben. Well, my poor Nicolas, I joy to see you safe, and at large—I warrant, you've been dreadfully alarmed.

Nic. Ah, mother, my small wits have been so scar'd, that I was on the point of pleading guilty, when that kind gentleman stept in, and happily convinced me I was innocent. Oh! 'tis a frightful place I have been in, and miserable wretches, like myself, will confess any thing to escape the torture. Heaven keep my friends out of their hands!

Ben. I cou'd not wish my enemies so ill—Look, who comes here?

MARIGUITA and BASCO enter.

Nic. How now, my mistress, whither are you bound? And you, my witty host, with the short memory—I warrant you are going to take measure of my old quarters—Well, joy be with you! little did you think you sent me into limbo only to air a cell for your reception.

Marig. Ah, Nicolas, forbear to scoff at us: We are miserable enough to appease the malice of our worst enemies: 'twas Basco's doing; I never meant to hurt you.

Nic. No, no, good soul, a little harmless perjury, a small mistake at the expense of truth and Christian charity, is all the harm that you

have done, except a kind design to give my limbs a stretch upon the rack: but I forgive you, pity you, and lament the foolish jest which brought you to this misery—As for you, Basco, your ingratitude has no excuse, for I have been your friend, and under Providence preserved your life. You of all men shou'd not have attempted mine. *[Basco shakes his head.]*

Ben. Come, Nicolas, no more! a generous nature spares a fallen foe.

Nic. True! and I'm sorry that I said the word—His silence has disarmed me—Let us go; the water's in my eyes, and it must needs have vent. *[Exeunt severally.]*

Scene a Chamber.

PEDRO is discovered alone.

Ped. So! then my sword, it seems, has miss'd its aim—My brother lives, and counsels me to fly. 'Tis well! To outwit the inquisition is some glory; even in my flight I triumph, and this casket, rich as Loretto's shrine, will warm my spirit, when Henrique freezes in the languid arms of his pale Mexican. Let him possess her! Cattania be my choice! a sublimated spirit like my own—and when I've turn'd these baubles into gold, we'll cross the Alps, and wed in that region, where every zephyr fans the fires of love. Oh! I am fascinated by that gypsey: I cannot live without her for one moment. Where can she be? This moment is my own! fortune now smiles, and beckons me away. I'll mount my horse and fly—*[As he is going out, two centinels oppose him with fix'd bayonets.]*

Cent. Stop, you can't pass.

Ped. Not pass? Not pass? who set you here to oppose me? Do you know who I am? Shoulder your arms, and give me way—

Cent. You cannot pass. You are known for Don Pedro.

FORTUNIO enters.

For. If you know him, know me for what I am, a desperate doating woman, that will rush upon your weapons if you bar my passage.

Cent. Pass then, our orders are not to exclude you—Señor Don Pedro, we shall not disturb your privacy, till you are call'd to judgment.

[Exeunt Centinels.]

Ped. So! then all's over. We are lost, my wench, and thou art faithful still.

Cat. Faithful to death; I never will desert thee; I took thee at the close of thy career, and were it in my power again to choose, again I'd take thee, fatal as thou art.

Ped. Then I defy my fate. I never yet lov'd aught in life but thee: If thou had'st failed me, that had been a blow to make my courage stagger.

Cat. The cloud has burst in every quarter, and ruin pours upon us in a deluge. The house you are in is garrison'd with soldiers: You have stay'd too long.

Ped. Come to my arms; this last embrace concludes — Farewell to life! I've made the world my slave; I throw it off without a sigh, Cattania—save one deep dying groan, that rends my heart, when thus I part from thee—and now 'tis o'er—These guards retire and leave me—Why do they so? but to afford me time and means to die as Rascafria shou'd.

Cat. 'Tis so, my Pedro! rightly you interpret.

It is not fitting your high birth to suffer with Roca and Cerbero.

Ped. No, I have fill'd a lofty part, my gallant wench, I'll not disgrace it with a shameful exit.

Cat. Look, here are passports, that will serve us both. You shall see, Pedro, what a mere momentary thing is death.

Ped. Stop, I forbid it: you defeat my purpose. How will it seem if I, who never yet fled from the face of man, shrink out of sight? But, as I do not mean to let them drag me to a loathsome prison, here is a friend that I have hoarded up for a dark hour like this—Hark! they are coming—

Cat. Give me your hand! Pedro, farewell for ever!

Ped. Farewell, my heroine—No tears, they will disgrace us both!

[*A file of soldiers enter, and form about Pedro.*]

VALDESOTO enters.

Ped. Now, uncle, what's the meaning of this guard? Is this the way you take to entertain your nephew and your guest.

Count. Convicted villain, do you put that question to me who know you—know you for Don Pedro?

Ped. Well! I am Pedro. State your charge against me.

Count. Who can enumerate such countless crimes as you stand charg'd with? Here are witnesses within my call, whose very looks wou'd kill you.

Ped. Where are your witnesses? Set them before me—

Count. Bring in those robbers—Let them see their chief.

Roca and CERBERO brought in.

Now, will you say you do not know these wretches?

Ped. Roca and Cerbero—I know them well, and I confess you have call'd them with some judgment. A rotten couple, black and foul at heart—You cannot do a better deed than hang them.

Roca. I thank you, captain, so that you hang with me, I care not—Living or dying, I am for good fellowship.

Cer. So your neck is but stretch'd, Diabolo, I'll swing, and murmur not.

Count. Take them away—By Heaven, he eyes them with a look so steady, his confidence amazes me—
[*Roca and Cerbero taken away.*
Have you no sense of shame to associate with those villains!

Cat. Oh! Pedro, to what purpose does this tend? when will you do your noble spirit justice?
[*Apart to him.*

Pedro. Droop not, be constant, more is yet to come.

Count. Enter — You, Nicolas Sassanigo by name — approach, and look upon your false accuser.

NICOLAS enters.

Ped. Aye, now you mend upon your witnesses; that man is innocent, and grossly injured; but I had, for my plea, self-preservation; what plea had you and your accurs'd inquisitors for your egregious folly? Had you demanded of me to sit down and make a transcript of Henrique's letter, I cou'd as soon have built the

aqueduct, that Rome bequeathed to your unworthy city, as copied his hand-writing.

Nic. Say no more, worthy Diabolo, upon that subject: if your great devil's spirit can endure the tweaks and twinges of a guilty conscience, when you shall face to face encounter a certain wounded patient of my curing, who carries with him some slight samples of your handy-work, you may defy remorse—and see, he comes—

Enter HENRIQUE, CELESTINA, and BENEDICTA.

Ped. Henrique!

Hen. Yes, Henrique—do not turn aside, unhappy Pedro, I come not to reproach you.

Ped. Nor shou'd you, Sir; for Cerbero and Roca had kill'd you in the cave but for my rescue, and you must confess the sword was merciful that came so near your heart, and yet forbore it. Now a few words to each of you in turn, and then farewell for ever—To you, as loudest in reproach, the first—Your Excellency has been bounteous in your gifts, and large in promises. I quit you of them altogether. There is your money, full as I received it. I cancel that account and owe you nothing—For you, my gentle cousin, I've a present—this untouched casket of your bridal jewels: the wife of Henrique, will become them well—Where I am going, I've no use for them: I pray you to accept them as my legacy.

Cel. Ah, Pedro, Pedro! my heart bleeds for you.

Ped. How tender some hearts are! Henrique, to you what shall I say, my brother? Nature, that made your soft and melting clay a compound of all kindness, temper'd me hard as the

flinty rock,—train'd me to daring acts, and as she sends the lion forth to prey upon the cowardly and feeble herd, so in my hand she put this mortal weapon, and when it failed to minister the means of life and freedom, bade me plant it here, and spurn misfortune from me—Hah! 'tis done.—[*Stabs himself.*—I sink—I faint—I die. The curtain falls: the farce of life is ended: congenial spirits, give me your applause—

[*Falls to the ground.*

Cat. Oh, Pedro, Pedro! let me share your death.

Ped. Live, live—There's yet one string that ties my heart, tear it not from me, fate, but spare Cattania. Oh, Henrique, I conjure you to preserve this one dear relic of a dying brother—She is a woman, generous, true, and loving. No blood has ever stain'd her guiltless hands; she has a soul for pity, and to her it is you owe your life. Her intercession made my conscience shrink, and my hand tremble, when it struck you short. So may Heaven bless you in the virtuous arms of Celestina, as you shall protect and pity this poor sufferer—Ah, no more—let this atone!—farewell.

Hen. Help, friends, she clings so close, I cannot raise her.

Nic. Ah, that will I—It is my poor Cattania—Come, Benedicta, it is a deed of mercy, and therefore fit for you.

Hen. Oh! sight of horror! See, he writhes in anguish—he pants, he struggles. Oh have mercy, Heaven! What a desponding dreadful look was that—He dies, he dies, 'tis past—Pedro de Rascafria is no more. [*The Curtain falls.*

